

## POULTRY DEPARTMENT.

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## The Family Fowl.

In carving the chicken to make it go 'round

Our family circle, I always have found,  
No matter what morsels I save for the rest,

The baby is sure to be pleased with the breast.

Next comes our young hopeful; like other small boys

He finds his chief comfort in making a noise;

Can't think of anything better to do Than to give him a drumstick to beat a tattoo.

Our sweet little daughter, just eighteen years old

To no one but mother her secreta has told;

Would it be such a very indelicate thing

To show that I know she's about to take wing?

My wife's eldest sister is doomed, I'm afraid,

To die, as she's lived, so long an old maid;

The only appropriate thing in the dish For her is the bone that may bring her her wish.

My brother, past fifty, still faithfully wears

The widower's weeds he's been wearing for years;

I hope he won't put too prophetic a point

On my offer to find him a nice "second joint."

And there's the best woman the world ever knew—

My wife—I have something reserved for her, too;

The rest of the giblets may surely now go

With the heart that I gave her two decades ago.

American Fancier

## Rape and Alternate Runs.

We have, at different times, recommended making two runs or yards for each poultry house and keeping some kind of vegetation growing in one yard all the time and turning the fowls from one yard to the other as occasion required. A correspondent of Farm Poultry gives an account of his method as follows:

The article in the last number of Farm-Poultry, by Mr. L. T. Brown, on poultry houses in England, serves to illustrate the fact that there is no one and only style of house suitable for chickens. Mr. Brown's system would undoubtedly apply well in this climate, and might be copied with profit, though many of us Americans do not feel the need of gravel runs. Most of us will agree with him as to the necessity of litter for hens to scratch in when confined; some of us would question the advisability of having chickens run among small fruit trees; but all of us would agree as to the benefit to be derived from chickens running on ground where there is vegetation.

Reading Mr. Brown's rather elabor-

ate arrangements for securing fresh fields for growing poultry, I was minded of my own arrangements, which seemed to me simple and quite as efficacious. Like Mr. Brown, I had long narrow runs; but I had runs on each side of the house—a north run and a south run. The north run I would use one year and the south run the next year—with a slight variation, as follows: If I was using my south run a certain year, I would plant the north run to Dwarf Essex rape, very early in the spring. Into this north run I would turn my flock just long enough to prevent the crop from being utterly ruined; I would then turn them back into the south run till the crop got in good shape again, when in they went again. This process went on till frost came; the chickens had enough fresh fodder all summer, and the ground was freshened up every year thereby.

The next year the process was reversed, and the north run was used for a run, and the south run for vegetation. By this process I kept both runs sweet and clean, and the chickens in the best of health. Rape, under such conditions, is a tremendous grower, and my chickens always ate it most voraciously. I tried the system for five years, and it worked beautifully.

I noticed in Mr. Brown's article that the chickens were turned into certain fields at certain hours of the day by an attendant, so that each lot of chickens should have its turn at the vegetables. I managed my own chickens, and I was away from the house the most of the day. I simply gave mine free range in their run until I thought it best to take them out again. The only difficulty was to know when to turn out without injury to the crop of rape. But rape, especially on well fertilized soil, will survive pretty rough treatment, and it doesn't take long to learn how much it will stand. I sowed mine broadcast very early in the spring, and let it get a fairly good size before turning the chickens in.

After a variety of experiments I settled down to the system outlined above. To those of the readers of Farm-Poultry who are not familiar with rape and the system of north and south runs, I recommend a fair trial.

## Summer Vacation for Poultry.

A vacation for workers is quite generally recognized to be necessary. A vacation for poultry is a new proposition. A writer tells, in the Successful Poultry Journal, how he manages to give his laying hens a vacation. Probably you might find the same plan a good thing for your hens.

My suggestions on this topic come from an experience with poultry on the farm. No matter how high-toned may be your stock and how good care you are accustomed to give them—and good stock and good care pay as well on the farm as anywhere—you will find it of advantage to give your poultry a care-free life on the range for about two months in summer. Fowls when confined to a less or greater degree and when fed liberally of egg-laying rations, need a change of diet and resting spell for awhile in order that they may retain their health. Any attempt to keep them at a high tension the year around will inevitably result sooner or later, in their getting "off their feed," becoming overly fat or in other ways getting in an unprofitable con-

dition. The business hen needs her summer vacation as well as the business man.

About the middle of June I look over the flock of layers and having decided about how many I want to dispose, I pick out the oldest or those that for any reason I do not want to keep longer, and send them to market. Keeping, as I do, the Barred Rocks, those I sell are apt to be heavy and fat, and, as prices are then good, they bring in good returns. Those remaining are put on one feed a day—some again just before night. They do not take kindly to the innovation, at first, and hang around mornings looking for their usual feed and they will get so hungry that it seems like treating them meanly after all they have done for you. But they soon get used to the change and the early sun sees them starting out in the fields for grass, bugs, seeds, etc. At this season of the year, when all crops are planted and growing, they do not do a great sight of damage and the farmer who makes a specialty of his poultry must not be too particular.

Like an athlete in training, they now get in the best of physical condition. They get rid of surplus fat and become hardier and more active. Egg production falls off and nature prepares for the annual moult. In this way the moult starts early and progresses favorably. About the middle of August they will be again ready for business. The egg-laying rations are again resumed. Feed is given liberally, for the hen must complete her new coat of plumage and also lay eggs, for eggs are now beginning to get scarce and higher in price. It is remarkable how quickly the flock, treated in the way I have indicated, will respond in an increased production of eggs, laying quite as well as they did before their vacation. Eggs were then the cheapest; now they have advanced considerably. In fact, I regard the fall of the year as the most profitable season for egg production. Having started early in the fall they will lay well until real cold weather sets in.

About the most unprofitable hens are those which drag along through the autumn with a slow and late moult with warm weather and a variety of picking, they ought to be laying high-priced eggs. In winter there is so much to contend with, the egg production is, at best, an uncertain proposition. It is true that the hen that lays well in the autumn is apt to take quite a rest in the winter, and it will not pay to spend much time and energy with her for eggs at that season. For winter layers we must raise the early pullets, and, as cold weather approaches, the care and attention may profitably be turned to them.

By recognizing the limits and conditions which go with the rearing of poultry, we may often save lots of labor, and, at the same time, gain better remuneration.

## Poultry Always a Good Crop.

The poultry crop, unlike all other crops, is not dependent upon climatic conditions. The corn crop sometimes fails. Potatoes may rot and in many fields this fall were not worth harvesting. In a dry season pastures are short and hay light, making milk cost as much or more than it sells for. But no matter what the weather conditions, the poultry and egg crop can

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be depended on for a fair percentage of profit.

The past season has been favorable for the production of poultry and eggs. In this vicinity eggs did not hatch as well as usual, but the mortality of young chickens was less than common, a larger per cent, of the hatch being raised. Eggs sold at a higher average price, and the high prices of dressed poultry have been sustained much later than usual.

In our own experience the hens have paid better than cows.—Green's Fruit Grower.

## Help on Poultry Farms.

A contributor to the Successful Poultry Journal, gives his ideas on this subject. There seem to be plenty of good openings for practical poultrymen who understand the business. If you are a young man with your life yet before you and no vocation selected, it might be a good plan to learn the poultry business. Do not expect high wages while learning, no apprentice can expect to get much pay at first.

I read the article signed by "New Yorker" in May number of S. P. J. with more than close interest, for this question of "help" has put more poultry plants "to the bad" than many other causes. It is of the most vital importance, and I honestly believe that this point should be more carefully considered by anybody who proposes to put much money into such a plant. The most successful poultry farms today—I mean the farms that are actually paying good living profits over and above capital invested—are those whose owners are the active managers.

Let me state that I am trying to take an impartial view of the subject, as there are perhaps about an equal number of omissions and commissions on one side as much as the other. I have worked for others both as a